Designated Research Centers and the Life Span Institute: Understanding the KU Research Community

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Objectives

Provide an overview of KU’s designated centers
A brief introduction to the Life Span Institute

  History

  Mission

  Productivity and Metrics

Some insights into how centers are made, grow, and are sustained
KU Designated Research Centers

KU’s Office of Research supports 10 designated centers
• Centers tend to transcend academic disciplines
• Models for sustaining and growing centers is based on external funding (i.e. “soft” money: grants and contracts)
In addition, the Office of Research supports two state surveys and two other affiliated centers.
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Origins of LSI
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Richard L. Schiefelbusch
Origins of LSI

1963: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NIH) established

1964/1967: KU among first US institutions awarded construction and center grants for research on intellectual/developmental disabilities
LSI Scope/Mission

1960s: Improving the quality of life for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through research.

1990s: Find research-based solutions for the challenges of human and community development, disabilities and aging.

Evolving: Addressing challenges in human health and development through discovery research and evidence-based intervention
The Life Span Institute
Home to 105 externally-funded projects and 173 scientists

- **School of Education**
  - Special Education
  - Educational Psychology

- **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**
  - Speech-Language-Hearing
  - Applied Behavioral Science
  - Clinical Child Psychology
  - Psychology
  - Linguistics
  - Molecular Biosciences
  - Communication Studies
  - Chemistry

- **School of Pharmacy**
  - Pharmacology/Toxicology
  - Pharmaceutical Chemistry

- **KU Medical Center**
  - Integrative & Molecular Physiology
  - Nutrition and Dietetics
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Hoglund Brain Imaging
  - Internal Medicine
  - Neurology
  - Speech/Language Disorders

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[Image of KU Life Span Institute logo]
LSI Performance vs. National Funding Trends

LSI vs. NIH/USDE
Annual proportion change from 1995

KU Life Span Institute
The University of Kansas
LSI Performance vs. National Funding Trends

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KU LIFE SPAN
INSTITUTE
The University of Kansas
LSI Return of Investment on State of Kansas Dollars

Return on Investment per dollar from State of Kansas

KU LIFE SPAN INSTITUTE
The University of Kansas
Real-World Impact of LSI Research

Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children

Betty Hart & Todd R. Risley

Children’s Vocabulary Differs Greatly Across Income Groups

- 13 higher SES children (professional)
- 23 middle/lower-SES children (working-class)
- 8 children from families on welfare

Age of child in months
Real-World Impact of LSI Research
Real-World Impact of LSI Research

Children with autism can learn to play and talk with their peers.
Real-World Impact of LSI Research

Redefining inclusion in education
Largest grant in KU history to Beach Center researchers

Wayne Sailor
Amy McCart
Real-World Impact of LSI Research
Real-World Impact of LSI Research

LSI’s Work Group collaborates with WHO to slow spread of Ebola
Summary

• Designated research centers contribute critically and substantially to the research environment at KU

• The Life Span Institute represents interdisciplinary research that spans the gap from biology to behavior to societal/educational interventions

• The Life Span Institute has a long history of productivity within KU and remarkable impact on peoples’ lives beyond KU

• Such centers are established, sustained, and grow based on entrepreneurial models...they largely work outside traditional academic departments and disciplines
Thanks!
Questions?